New Hampshire
Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food

NEWS RELEASE
Immediate Release

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Maple producers and consumers are wondering why the sharp upswing in the prices of maple syrup, both retail and wholesale, this summer and fall. The Division of Regulatory Services surveyed 25 NH producers last week and obtained the following retail price information. Prices are for 2008 Grade A maple syrup packed in plastic jugs. Prices average 8-10% higher across the range of container sizes compared with the survey conducted back in April 2008, at the conclusion of the maple run.

Prices at grocery stores are generally higher than sugarhouse prices. For comparison, we took a look at four Concord-area chain supermarket store prices for maple syrup in plastic containers. The quarts averaged $19.32, and the pints $10.49. The most popular supermarket sales unit of pure maple syrup is the glass bottle, either 12.5 ounces, which averaged $9.67, or 8.5 ounces, which averaged $8.29. Gifts shops and tourist locations typically charge still higher prices.

Several factors are contributing to these price increases for maple products. Bulk prices paid by large packers are at an all-time high, and in some cases are nearly equivalent to the retail prices being received, certainly not a sustainable pricing scheme. The Canadian surplus inventory, which for years acted as a drag on upward price movement, has been depleted. Without the specter of big inventories in Canadian warehouses, prices are now free to fly. Another factor in higher bulk prices on Canadian syrup for US purchasers is that the Canadian and US dollars are now pretty much at parity. For years, a favorable exchange rate had made Canadian syrup a bargain for US buyers. Lastly, energy costs significantly impacted the cost of producing the spring 2008 crop. NH sugarhouse retailers face difficult pricing decisions, either try to maintain their local customer base with modest price increases, or set much higher pricing that reflects a reasonable mark-up on the wholesale value, and aligns more closely with that charged by non-producer retailers. The very wide range found between low and high prices reflects this pricing dilemma.

	Average	Low-High
Gallon	$46.80	35-70
½ Gallon	26.77	20-34
Quart	15.84	11-23
Pint	9.21	6.75-12
½ Pint	5.94	4.50-8
100ml	3.67	3-4

--Richard Uncles, Director
Division of Regulatory Services